25 Cents March, 1932

GAY PARISIENNE

Joseph Lichtblau
Kay Carroll —

Richard Donovan
Frank Kenneth Young

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Recaptured Love

By
Frank Kenneth Young
and
Charles B. McCray

GASTON MAURINE swung down the boulevard toward the home of his beloved Triona Aultere, a melody of home-sweet-home surging in his heart. Ah, it was great to be back in Paris again! The old sights, the old sounds. The freshness of Springtime, the sweetness of nature in bloom! He sniffed the fresh air in heartfelt appreciation. *Mon Dieu*, yes, it was great to be home once more . . .

Gaston had but recently completed a successful contract for Goldsted-Bernstein Films, Inc., at their Long Island Studio. He had been offered a renewal at double salary, and had turned it down flat. He suffered from nostalgia. He needed the cure. Money? Fame? Zut! such things meant nothing at such a time. His beloved Paris was calling him home! He could not ignore his yearning . . .

A group of Parisiennes spied and recognized him. Ran to capture him, effusive in their admiration, garrulous in their welcome. This tall, tanned, handsome countryman whose charm had won millions of dollars for American box offices! They requested him to sing for them, to sign autographs—chatted tirelessly about a thousand things. Finally, in desperation, he pushed them aside.

"You will excuse me," he said. "I go now to see the sweetest girl in the universe—my own Triona!" He blew an imaginary kiss from cupped fingers.

A boulevardier detached himself from the group, his face drawn in lines of woeful anxiety. "Ah, Gaston," he murmured, "how can we tell you?"

Gaston grasped him roughly, shook him. "Do you mean, *Monsieur*, that something has befallen my angel? She did not meet me at the railway station, but I thought. . . . Speak, *Monsieur*, *vite!* What has happened?"

"Ah, Gaston, Triona has been flagrantly disloyal! News of her amours is everywhere; gossip is on everybody's tongue!"

Gaston snapped his fingers deprecatingly. "Poof, my friends, she has been lonesome—lonesome for me! It ees nothing!" And pushing his way out of the group, he strode angrily down the boulevard.

Presently arriving at the apartment house he sought, he nodded cordially to the concierge who let him in. And he was atremble with eagerness to see his Triona once more, to hold her in his arms.

But as he opened the door of her apartment, she did not rise and rush to meet him. Her greeting was no more ardent than if he had been a casual acquaintance. She merely indicated that his presence was acknowledged. Gaston was surprised, provoked, hurt.

He gazed at her in astonishment as she reclined on the chaise longue, a slender cigarette holder between two fingers. She scarcely moved, even to smoke. One leg was bared almost to the hip, except for the slight protection of sheer silk hose, the careless drape of chiffon negligee.

There was no doubting the aphrodisiac of lips and eyes. The gossips had been right. The twin-peaked curve of upper lip was sensuously red, the droop of dark eyes under black brows plucked to a mere line, held subtle allure. The screen of smoke which weaved about her face added mystery to that allure, but detracted not in the least from its positive assurance.

For months and months, Gaston had anticipated a reunion with Triona, but now he was decidedly puzzled. Her leg was as lovely as ever, but the bold manner in which it was displayed was not a natural characteristic of hers. There was a reason for the change in her, and he determined to discover it.

"Is your indifference," he asked, "the result of my not taking you with me to Long Island? You know how hard I tried

to get you a contract there. Are you piqued because I failed?"

"Not at all," replied Triona languidly. "I am quite content to make films for my French audiences—and I am not indifferent! Come, sit by me, Gaston, and learn for yourself!"

The man moved eagerly to her side. She raised herself a trifle and allowed him to gather her round, slim figure into his arms. He kissed her without thought of censure. His hands roved about her thinly-attired body, striving zealously to recapture a lost delight.

She rested her cigarette holder on a convenient tray, and her hands then crept about his neck with a slowness both deliberate and provoking. Her white hands, smooth and soft and warm, patted the nape of his neck, caressed his ears, ran lightly through his hair. There was studied huskiness in her voice as she spoke.

"It is good to have you with me once again, beloved."

She looked at him coolly, calculatingly, in the unfathomable manner she had adopted, gave a long sigh and pressed her lips to his mouth.

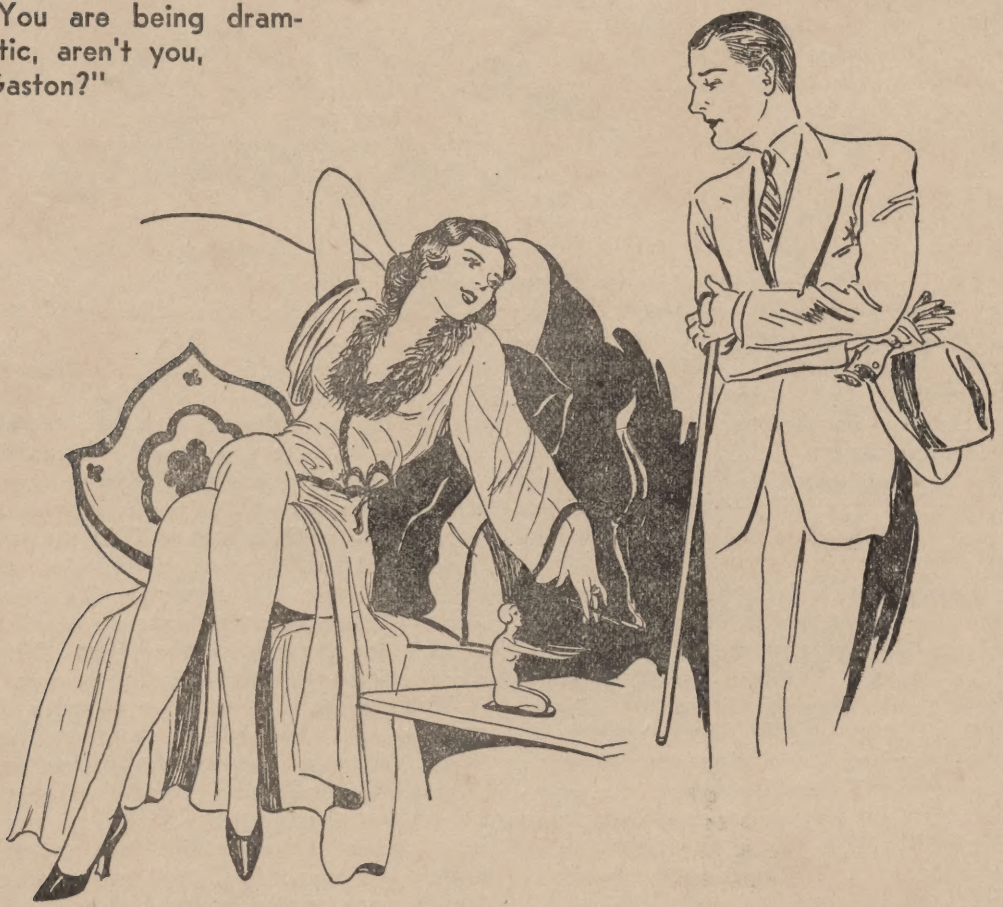
There was no denying her passion, yet Gaston remained unconvinced of her love for him. Disengaging her twining clinging arms, he rose to his feet.

For an instant she was infuriated. "You love me no more?" she exclaimed. "You who, a moment ago, accused me of lacking affection, of being indifferent toward you! Bah!"

He retrieved his hat, stick and gloves from the small boudoir table where he had placed them.

"No, Triona," he said quietly. "I do love you, but I do not want our love spoiled by promiscuous affection."

"You are being dramatic, aren't you, Gaston?"



"What is the name of the thing they are playing?" she asked.

"On the contrary! I came to tell you that I still love you. Came to resume our life as it was before I went away. I turned down splendid offers that I might return. But that does not matter now. You do not matter. I do not matter. Love is dead!"

"Then you believe this gossip about me? That I am wild—indiscreet?" She was laughing hoarsely now, a consummate part well acted many times before the camera. It was designed to indicate that she was an abused women, a victim of circumstances.

Gaston was quick to observe this, and angered by her insincerity, he was not averse to telling her the truth about herself.

"Listen, *cherie*," he said. "You may have once loved me in all sincerity, but now you do not love me at all! As the saying goes, 'In her first passion, woman loves her lover: in all others, she loves only love!' *N'est ce pas?*"

She reached for a cigarette, showing annoyance. "Bah! You quote me proverbs! It that why you came back from America?" She stuck the cigarette in her holder, and impatiently struck a flame.

"You are being dramatic, aren't you, Gaston?"

"Perhaps! But what of that? *Bonsoir, Mam'selle!*"

He slammed the door as he went out.

In truth, love was dead! He walked down the boulevard in a terrible mood. The brightness of a theater loomed before him, and he turned in to view Triona's latest screen production. But he could not sit through the show. When Triona danced across the silver screen, he groaned at the sight of her. Finally, he rose and left the place.

Many people were promenading the street—men attired in conventional black, women in stylish gowns and wraps. He suddenly found that people bored and annoyed him. He had never heard such senseless chit-chat as came from the laughing, talking groups. Never seen such inharmonious color

schemes as were affected by them.

The world was mad. Love was dead. Triona was passion-crazy!

He turned into a cafe and ordered a stiff absinthe. He downed it at a draught and ordered another. He rotated his drinks with cognac. The cadenza of the solicitous waiter angered him, and he swore at the man for his polite attentions.

When time came to leave, Gaston was so intoxicated that a taxi driver had to help him to his apartment, and wake the concierge to put him to bed.

Gaston awoke in the morning with a terrible headache, and a terrible realization. Despite everything, he still loved Triona, and would never be himself again or satisfied with life, until Triona returned his love. Something had to be done about the matter! *Oui*, but—what?

Ah, he would make her jealous! Yes, that is what he would do! He would cause her interest in him to be reawakened!

Accordingly he dressed, and set out for various places of amusement. The fact that all such places would be closed at this early hour made no difference to Gaston. He had only to make known his needs, part with a large amount of francs, and everything would soon be abuzz with gaiety.

Never had he appeared so happy; never had he captured so many feminine hearts as on that memorable morning. It was consummate acting, of course, but—what of that? Had he not many times on the screen enacted the theme of "Laugh, Clown, Laugh, even though your heart is breaking?" Yes, indeed, a sufficient number of times to make it seem very real to him. Now stern reality had caused it to be real!

Gaston knew that news of his recently staged spectacle would soon reach Triona's ears by way of the gossipers that lived on the boulevards. Impatiently, he waited for this to happen, then phoned her at her apartment. In her answers he found none of the jealous crispness he had expected, but only an ill-disguised sweetness of passionate yearning. He clamped down the receiver in disgust.

He paced the floor, snapped at his valet when that worthy attempted to become solicitous, and refused to eat his meals. He smoked innumerable cigarettes, throwing them away but a moment after lighting them. Many times he had behaved just so upon the screen. But this was not acting; it was real—terrifyingly so!

Shoving into a topcoat and cramming on a hat, he went out and bought a ticket at the Casino de Paris. But the music, the comedy, the rich display of attractive beauties in various stages of undress, the naughtiness of the clever lines that carried the audience away—all left him cold, bored him. "What to do to win Triona?" was the eternal question that beat upon his brain.

At last, his mind prodded to the breaking point, he evolved a plan. The finesse of it appealed to him, but he was not sure of its practicability. Anyhow, he decided to try it. He was desperate enough to try anything.

Therefore, he betook himself to a producer of French films. Long and earnestly, he talked with this man. And at last, the man consented to grant the favor asked. Give him a little time—time in which to arrange matters.

Then Gaston went again to phone Triona, responding with alacrity to the honey of her passionate words.

Several nights later, when he helped her into his waiting limousine, she was marvelously attired in a gown of bronze silk that lent ineffable charm to her brunette beauty. She was still a sophisticate in role and manner, however, and he warned himself not to become overly confident of success.

At the Club Francais, he took from his pocket a penned note and slipped it with a twenty-franc note into the hand of the head-waiter, taking care not to be seen by Triona.

Sitting opposite him at the table, Triona smoked her inevitable cigarette and gazed from under languid lids at the crowd about her. But, suddenly, as the orchestra began playing, her eyes widened in surprise, and she listened attentively. Gaston hid a smile behind his napkin. The first part of his plan was working perfectly.

"What is the name of the thing they are playing?" she asked.

"It is a song that we loved years ago,

remember, *mon angel?*"

"Ah, yes, so I do! Pretty, isn't it?"

Gaston reached his hand affectionately across the table. "You still think so, Triona, my dove?"

She nodded.

Gaston caught a light in her eyes that was new since his return, but that he had found frequently in glances given him in the old days. His plan seemed to be working perfectly.

They concluded their meal and drinks

"I am sure you will enjoy it immensely." he added.

at the Club Francais, and again ventured forth in the limousine.

Gaston placed an arm about her gleaming shoulders, and drew her toward him in a tender embrace. "I'm going to ask a favor of you, sweet," he said. "I hope you will grant it. I would ask that you come with me to see one of the first pictures we made together!"

"Impossible!" she exclaimed. "They are so old they are no longer being shown in theaters."

"*Au contraire,* my dear! Justin La Gardie, the producer, has had one revived and synchronized with sound effects to conform to the prevailing mode. Many once-popular pictures are being treated in that way. Would you not like to see our first great success again, angel, and observe the effect of sound combined with movement? The picture is being shown at a small theater down the street. Come, say you will go with me!"

Still she hesitated.

"I am sure you will enjoy it immensely," he added.

"We shall see," was her final answer.

Gaston clasped her hands warmly in the dark, and was delighted when he felt an answering pressure. He sighed with great relief.

Arriving at the theater, he escorted her to a seat inside, and engaged her in light conversation till time for the show to start.

And once the first scene was flashed upon the screen, she gave the production her rapt attention.

The first scene revealed her in a boudoir, with a maid in attendance. As the scene flashed before her vision, she was hardly conscious of Gaston's arm about her shoulders, or his trembling fingers clasping her hand. Then the scene changed, and Gaston entered the room. She hastened forward to greet him. All unconsciously, as she nestled closer in her actor-lover's arms, so did she nestle closer in the arms of the real Gaston.

"I love you!" came in a printed caption on the screen.

And "I love you!" whispered her lips in Gaston's ear.

The man was aware of a new warmth and tenderness creeping into her body as she relaxed in his arms, and again he was delighted. Unbelievable as it seemed, his plan was carrying through!

It was due to the association of ideas —the recurrence of incidents and events in which she had once been a principal participant; the recalling from memory of olden scenes and times. All served to warm her mind and soul with emotions similar to those experienced so long ago. In mind and memory, while watching the picture on the screen, she was reliving the first days of their companionship, and recapturing the first thrills of their old, sweet love.

All during the showing of the picture, Gaston was conscious of the subtle change taking place in her, and was himself experiencing thoughts and feelings like unto hers. It was as if both were being born again by the magic of memories, and finding their love reborn with them.

When came the finale of the screen story, the fade-out in which the hero leaned over Triona and swept her into his arms, holding her for a two-minute kiss, then, as it happened upon the screen, somehow, so did it happen to Triona and Gaston in the flesh. Almost unconscious of the act, seemingly without volition of their own, they embraced eah other tenderly, forgetful of the audience about them.

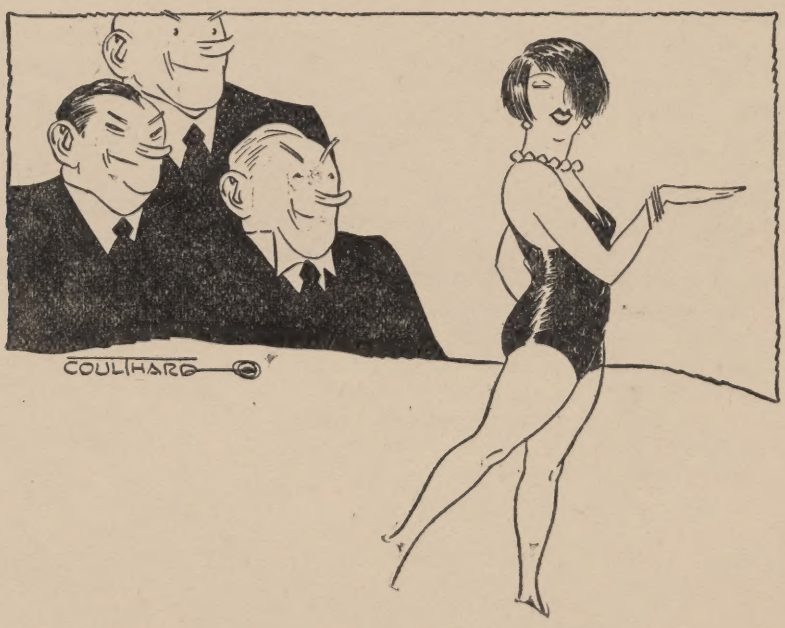
And what a kiss! It left both of them weak as the photoplay before them faded and the sound ceased.

"Why, Gaston," she murmured, "I do love you—love you as never before! Seeing this picture, with you by my side, has stirred my memory, and warmed my heart. Kiss me again, my beloved."

"Let us go home to your apartment, *cherie,*" he whispered. "Where there is nobody to see, we may express ourselves more fully!"

And, rising, they left the theatre together, to enter the limousine waiting outside. . . .

"Dearie, I never did feel safe in the city."



Passed by the Board of Censors

Charlie, the Half-Wit!

By Joseph Lichtblau

CHARLIE BING was in a devil of a stew, and the way he glared at his beloved old man when Senior laid down the law to him that afternoon in his office, was nothing short of manslaughter in the first degree. Ths is not to say that Charlie wasn't fond of his dad as a good son should always be; he most certainly was—but what the heck can you do with your old gent when he's as unreasonable as this?

". . . And what's more, you half-wit!" roared Senior, purple in the face with wrath, "if you don't give up this damned gold-digger immediately if not sooner, you'll be minus one doting old father and his prospective fortune right now!"

"But, dad!" moaned Charlie, piteously. "I'm sure you'll change your mind about Chris if you see her! She's the sweetest little kid on Broadway, and she supports her mother and never went on a wild party in her life!"

"Oh, yeah?" roared Charlie's father, cynically, champing at his cigar until it was in tatters. "So she's just a sweet little angel like the rest of the pure chorines who want to marry a rich man's son, is she, you dimwit? Butter wouldn't melt in her mouth would it? Listen!" and he banged his tough old fist down so hard on the desk the de luxe fountain pen set rattled. "You're —going—to—give—her—up just the same! I mean, you're going to tell her where she gets off, or you can get the hell out of here and never darken my door again! I know her kind, and she's not going to make a sap out of the only son I've got if I know it!"

Well, even Charlie knew when he was licked, and he was not such a bright lad at that, if you get the idea. He had been flunked out of four colleges—but let that pass. The point was, he had come to his beloved father with the most touching, naïve confidence that Senior would give three cheers of delight when he told him about Chris; and when Chris had warned him not to be too optimistic, he had scoffed at her. You see, Charlie was only twenty-one, though he had made a stab at four different universities, the studes of which were the fastest lot of hot sheiks in the country. The painful truth was, Charlie lacked experience, not only with the femmes, but with Life; he was just a good-looking moron with a millionaire father. Senior wondered often, aghast, how he had ever fathered such progeny as this; and more than once it had cost him heavy dough to rescue Charlie from some dumb jam the lad had gotten himself into because he was such a vacuum brain.

"Now get the hell out of here and let me do some work," wound up Senior, making savage gestures toward the door.

Meekly, but with hot and furious rebellion in his heart, Charlie ambled from the luxurious office. "I won't give up Chis!" he vowed hotly as he shot his zippy speed bus of violent green to West Fiftieth and Eighth Avenue, where his Adored One lived in a theatrical rooming house. "Chris is an angel, and Dad is crazy in the bean when he says she's just a cheap gold-digger like the rest of 'em!"

He rushed wildly to the second floor of the house and knocked on Chris' door. "Darling, it's Charlie!" he cried. "Can I come in?"

There was a brief silence. During his wait, Charlie recalled, with tenderness, the letters Chris had shown him from her mother, in Richmond. Sure proof that Chris was supporting her as she claimed. He also recalled Chris' persistent refusals to drink the good liquor he offered her in various restaurants and night clubs—

"Oh, I never drink, honey boy," she always said, piously. "It's bad stuff for a girl to fool around with, besides, your dad might object to a daughter-in-law who drinks, so why should I offend him, darling?"

Hence, Charlie was sure Senior was all moist about Chris. Hence, he waited with tense eagerness for her to admit him, now. A gold-digger? Huh! Why, the dear kid hadn't asked him for so much as a wrist watch yet!

The door opened a crack, and Chris' gorgeous blue eyes looked into his. As she saw who it was, the rather odd look of tension in her expression left it; she smiled delightfully.

"Oh, so it's *you*, darling!" she cooed. "I wanted to make sure, because some horrid bill collectors have been pestering me to death lately."

She drew him inside and closed the door with a white, thrilling, slim hand. Charlie saw at once, as her lips clung to his deliriously, that she was hardly dressed to receive company, for all she wore was a very transparent negligee

"He's darn hard-boiled, Chris," he wailed. "You'll never make him see the light, because he's simply savage about chorus girls!"

of violet *soie de Chine* and nothing else absolutely beneath it!

He could see every milky curve of her beneath the gossamer garment, and he tingled from stem to stern as they flowed ripplingly against his snappy blue serge coat. She had pulled down his head so that his eyes rested against her satiny cheek; he could not see an inch beyond her; but all at once he heard a window slam down hastily, and he jerked away from her, startled.

He was just in time to see shoe heels of masculine solidity disappear onto the fire escape, and he wondered stupidly if he were dreaming.

"Chris, what was that?" he yelped. "Was there a man here with you?"

"Why, *Charlie!*" she said. "Are you crazy, darling? A man here with me? I'm surprised and shocked, Charlie! I mean, I really am! You know you're the only one I'm hysterical about, so how can you make a crack like that, dear?"

Charlie blinked at her fatuously. He had to rub his eyes and look at that window hard to assure himself that perhaps he had only imagined he saw somebody on that fire escape. Still, he wasn't dumb enough to take her word for it altogether. However, a quick investigation of the fire escape most certainly showed him that no one was there, so he felt he had been seeing things and turned to her with tender repentance and apologies.

She forgave him sweetly. "Why, dear, I just came in from the bathroom in the hall a moment ago," she said. "I'll dress behind that screen, and you can tell me what your father said when you asked him if you could marry me."

The screen was in such a position that the light from the window revealed every line of Chris on it while she got into her step-in and chemise; and Charlie could hardly speak coherently, his eyes glued to that marvelous silhouette, fascinated. True, Chris had permitted him in the room before; but always she had kept the door wide open so that Dame Grundy would be satisfied and the conventions unviolated, for wasn't Chris a Nice Girl Who Would Be Shocked By Improper Behavior?

"And—uh—" gulped Charlie, staring, "he said he'd throw me out on my ear if I married you, Chris, so we're—uh—sunk for keeps unless you can make dad see the light or something." He sank down on the one chair in the room and lit a cigarette miserably, wishing that she'd snap out from behind that screen before he so far forgot himself as to do Something Rash. Gosh, what curves!

She flung herself on his lap and strangled him with kisses.

"I was afraid of that," she cried. "But leave it to me, darling! I'm clever. I'll speak to your father myself and I'll bet I can bring him around if anyone can. . . . Who do you love, precious boy?"

Charlie told her fervently. "But he's darn hard-boiled, Chris," he wailed. "You'll never make him see the light, because he's simply savage about chorus girls, absolutely!"

Thoughtfully, Chris rumpled his hair. All at once, her eyes were brilliant with inspiration. "I've got it, sweetheart," she cried. "You'll be hysterical abut this idea when you hear it—it's simply swell."

"Shoot," begged Charlie. "The suspense is something terrible."

He listened, with an infatuated and growing grin, to her for ten minutes. He forgot completely his first dark doubts of her when he entered the room. Boy, this was an Idea with a giant I!

So he happily sped home, after taking Chris out to luncheon at the Ritz, and he forgot to wonder whom she had gotten that million-dollar afternoon frock, with the accompanying swell fox fur, from, while they danced in the Byzantine Tea Room. She was love and passion and ecstasy in his arms while they danced, and the way her curves melted against him was enough to make him wilder about her than ever. . . . It was five when he entered his room and began to change his clothes for dinner, and while he put studs into his evening shirt, his heart pounded, for in two hours, Chris' swell idea was due to be put into operation.

The Old Man was unusually sour at dinner, even for him.

"Well," he snapped, eating consomme and glaring at Charlie, "did you tell that gold-digger where she got off as I told you to?"

"I did, dad," said Charlie, meekly, but grinning a wicked grin on the sly.

"I can hardly believe it," sneered Senior. "For once in your life you seem to have showed signs of a brain, and it's hardly possible."

The correct, dignified English butler, serving the next course, concealed a grin behind his hand. He was used to seeing Charlie getting bawled out, and it never failed to give him a real kick. He returned to the magnificent dining room five minutes later with news for Senior.

"A young lady desires to see you, sir," he announced. "Her name is rather an extraordinary one, sir, and she has no calling card."

"What is it?" barked Senior.

"Miss Chris, sir. Nothing else. If I may say so, sir, she looks like a chorus girl, and rather loud and vulgar."

Charlie gave him a glare of wrath. A hot retort was on his tongue, but he checked it furiously—and prudently. He resolved to take a sock at Niles's nose first chance he got, for daring to insult Chris like that. And his heart hammered like mad, for the gigantic Idea was about to be Pulled Off.

"Show her in," growled the Old Man. "I've been expecting a visit of this sort from her for some time, and I'll see her in the small reception room downstairs, Niles, right after dinner."

As Niles departed, Senior glared wickedly at his offspring.

"I thought so," he said. "You didn't put the crusher on her hard enough, and now she's here to make a scene!" He stuck out his big chest and breathed hard. "Wait till *I* get through with her," he said. "Just wait!"

"Yes, dad," said Charlie, meekly.

As Senior left the dining room, fif-

"You old darling," she was cooing, "so you're Charlie's dad!"

teen minutes later, he was smoking a huge black Havana savagely. Charlie trembled as he saw him go, for he Feared The Worst, in spite of the cleverness of Chris' plan. Charlie waited five minutes with a palpitating heart, then stole downstairs. Voices came to him from behind the silken drapes of the reception room. He peered through the drapes and gave a surprised, low yelp of amazement.

Chris was on his father's lap kissing him passionately! But that was nothing! "You old darling," she was cooing, "so *you're* Charlie's dad! Well, may I be a striped codfish if this isn't the richest, hottest thing I ever heard of! He breezed into my room this afternoon just a minute after you made that dash onto the fire escape and escaped down into the yard, and I never even thought of connecting you with him! Can you tie it!"

"S-sh-sh!" whispered Senior chuck-

ling. "Not so loud, baby! This is as much of a surprise to me as it is to you, for I never dreamed *you* were the chorine Charlie was all burned up about! Only this morning, I bawled him out and told him to tell you where to get off, never dreaming it was *you;* and when he left the office, crushed, I sneaked out the back way and shot over to your room—you'll have to get a real place soon, of course — for our little love nest, and—"

"The rest of it doesn't matter," she giggled. "I understand, you adorable old sweetheart. And to think I was going to vamp you in this very room for poor, half-wit Charlie's sake, so you'd let me commit matrimony with that sap! Honestly, I'm hysterical about you, you hot old dear, and Charlie's such a wet smack that I could hardly go through with this if it wasn't for your money. I've been priming your nit-wit son for a killing for ages, and nearly passing out doing it, but now—" And she planted a most enthusiastic kiss on his bald spot.

Charlie Bing watched, with a swooning feeling, his Old Man complacently stick out his chest. He heard him say, chuckling:

"Well, baby, you're certainly frank and honest with me about what your intentions were, and I admire you for it! But remember, you lay off that kid from now on and devote yourself to pappa, hear me?"

What Chris answered, Charlie did not hear. He had heard enough to last him for the Rest Of His Life, and he turned away with a hollow moan. But suddenly he grinned, then chuckled, then burst into crazy laughter. He rushed into the room holding his sides and rocking with mirth, and the Two Gay Deceivers looked at him paralyzed.

"Don't move, dad," he gasped at last, with the most astounding cheerfulness. "And you, too, Chris! As you were—and not a hard feeling in the world, though I got an earful of every word you both broadcast a minute ago while I listened in!"

Senior stammered, his fat face the color of a ripe tomato: "You—you—were eavesdropping, Charlie?"

"Righto, dad!" chirped Charlie, still holding his sides.

"And you don't want to shoot me or something?" gasped the Old Man, goggling at him incredulously.

"What for, dad?" chuckled Charlie. "I'm simply tickled pink to discover you're human—though I had dark doubts about it—and if anyone has to two-time me behind my back with Chris, I'd rather it would be you, you darned old hypocrite, than anyone else in the entire universe, for a very good reason!"

Senior rose heavily and sheepishly, still clutching Chris in his astonishment. He looked at Charlie and Charlie looked at him, nonchalantly. Deliberately Charlie lit a cigarette and thrust his hands in the armholes of his vest and stuck out his chest—a dead ringer for the Old Man in his cockiest moments. The goofy expression was gone; it was replaced instead by the most sardonic and sophisticated look in the world. Senior rubbed his eyes as he gazed at his transformed offspring, then he croaked:

"What—what do you mean, Charlie?"

"It's like this, dad," Charlie grinned and poked him in the fifth rib with a knowing finger. "I'm all tied up with Juanita O'Day, star of the Strand Revue. It's been worrying me quite a lot to know where I'd get the coin to stop her from suing me for breach of promise—but now, dad, you're going to come across like a major—and like it! If you don't your half-wit son will make it so hot for you in the scandal sheets, that this house will be flooded by reporters and the publicity will simply slay you! I'll admit I was knocked for a heap of grief when I found out what sort of baby Chris is, but this particular ill wind's got the classiest silver lining I ever saw in my life, darned if it hasn't!"

Did Charlie get the money? Don't be sil! Of course he did!

And the night he went out to find a New Charmer and Pass A Most Wicked Evening with dad's Hush Money, he chuckled to himself more than ever.

For Charlie had never come within a mile of La Belle O'Day in his life and didn't even know what she looked like!!

One Busy Day

By Kay Carroll

(Concluded)

TESS leaned toward him.

"I'd like another cigarette." He held the automatic lighter for her, the flame shining through her golden curls. She felt a bit dizzy, and her lips parted tantalizingly as she withdrew the cigarette amid a cloud of smoke, her face dangerously close to his.

Inevitably their lips met and clung for a brief instant.

Bob rose suddenly and blurted an apology, but Tess, snuggling back among the cushions, seemed to smile another invitation.

He swept her into his arms and sealed her parted lips with his.

HURRY, Hortense . . . I'm awfully busy today". Tess spoke rather sharply to the masseuse. She had been nearly an hour late for her appointment, and the exhilarating effects of several highballs which had followed the cordials at Bob Summerfield's apartment were slowly wearing off, leaving her a trifle nervous, but her tenseness relaxed under the skilful manipulations of Hortense's fingers, expertly massaging her nude body until the skin glowed pink.

Tess thought over the events of her busy day . . .Exciting hours . . . Jack was a darling . . . Her heart beat faster and she blushed vividly, even though Hortense didn't notice it, when she recalled certain incidents during that mad hour at his apartment.

Bob seemed a bit conscience-stricken when they parted . . . one of Jack's best friends, and all that sort of thing . . . they had simply lost control of themselves . . . well, thought Tess, it was divinely thrilling while it lasted . . . he, chief usher at her wedding . . . she, a bride of a fortnight . . . they *must* have been crazy.

She thought of Jack and that fascinating secretary of his . . . would he . . . her heart skipped a beat and she sat up.

"Enough, Hortense, I'm late . . . send Marie to do my hair" . . . The skilled fingers ceased their movements, a bit unwillingly. Hortense had many customers who submitted themselves to her rejuvenating ministrations and emerged feeling as though they had a new lease on life . . . Some rather neglected matrons experienced strange sensations and showered gifts upon her . . . then there were several who insisted that she exercise her skill upon them in their homes, where, in the privacy of milady's boudoir, the professional touch frequently became as tender and as thrilling as a lover's caresses. Hortense knew a host of tricks, and could always be persuaded to trot them out for the benefit of those who paid sufficiently well for the performance.

And last, but certainly not least, there were a select few like Tess . . . young, beautiful, luscious . . . upon whom Hortense delicately exercised a trick or two simply for the thrills she herself received in the process. She was experiencing just such a thrill when Tess's voice stopped the ceremony.

"Ah . . . mademoiselle is so lovely" . . . Hortense sighed rapturously, her eyes a veil of mist.

"Thanks, Hortense . . . You're a dear" . . . Tess smiled.

Slipping on a negligee which she kept at the beauty shoppe for this purpose, Tess turned to greet Marie, who came hurrying in at that moment.

"Hello, Marie . . . my hair . . . it's a sight."

Marie laughed heartily . . . "Ah, *cherie*, ze honeymoon . . . one cannot keep ze hair in order on ze honeymoon . . . *non?*" . . . Her sensitive fingers were already at work among Tess's curls, patting, twisting, arranging.

Tess kept her thoughts to herself . . . it wasn't the honeymoon that caused the present disarray.

Late that afternoon Jack's telephone rang . . .

"How is zat?" . . . Marie finally asked. Tess was Marie's secret passion. Dressing her hair was a sacred rite, accompanied by many sighs and heart-flutters . . . Marie had learned her profession in Paris, where she was apprenticed to a hairdresser when she was twelve years old. Since then, her whole life had been spent with women . . . women of all descriptions . . . and she had learned many tricks in the various beauty establishments in which she had been employed, and like Hortense, did not hesitate to use them to open the purses of her customers.

One important and never-failing trick consisted of acting as lady's maid after the coiffure had received its last pat and twist . . . Then the negligee was removed, and, while Madame was dressing, she heard many compliments on her figure, her skin, her charm as Marie flitted about . . . The donning of stockings might be accompanied by such murmured remarks: "Madame has a very smart ankle . . . such a pretty leg." Undergarments received their share of attention . . . adjustment of the corset or brassiere received special treatment and elicited many "Ohs" and "Ahs" of admiration. "*Ma cherie*, such a tiny waist . . . skin so smooth, it is like silk . . . Madame's bust, it is entrancing."

Marie's fluttering fingers meanwhile bestowed a shower of light caresses . . . She frankly liked the feminine form divine, and her attentions not only flattered the recipients and resulted in sizable tips, but gave her a thrill as well . . . Some love-starved patrons found Marie's service the most delightful part of the visit to the beauty shoppe, and this was so evident to Marie that she always allowed an extra half-hour in making her appointment list.

Tess was a constant source of delight, and she found Marie's attentions not at all displeasing. Time passed all too quickly.

LATE that afternoon, Jack's telephone rang . . . A feminine voice:

"Mr. Dane?" . . . Jack recognized the purring contralto.

"How are you, Mrs. Dunbar?"

"Just aching to see you . . . some new developments in my case . . . Can you come up to tea? . . . 5:30 . . . That's fine."

Jack hung up the telephone receiver with a trace of irritation. Ethel Dunbar was a matron who had reached the so-called "dangerous age." Wealthy, she had satisfied every whim. Now she was bored and looking for new thrills. One of the thrills she was seeking was freedom from her extremely jealous husband, almost twice her age. He didn't know it. She had never been able to find sufficient grounds for divorce in the opinion of Jack Dane, who was her attorney. She had met him six months before, and had become infatuated with the young lawyer. Jack had turned a rather cold shoulder to her advances, but now that she was a client . . . well, a client is a client to a youthful attorney, and a taxi soon bore him to her apartment in response to her summons.

A rather dim room off the main drawing-room was Mrs. Dunbar's personal nook. Deep chairs and rugs . . . an enormous lounge, piled high with cushions, a seductive incense burner. Two glasses and a large cocktail shaker stood ready as she lit the incense and drew the shades. She was a rather tall woman, hair of rich bronze, dark brown sleepy-lidded eyes, lips very red and very full, with deeply indented corners. Her figure, once slim, was now frankly plump, but still alluring in its ripe voluptuousness, and lounging pajamas of black-and-crimson, very tight around the hips and daringly open back and front, displayed to best advantage her full-breasted form.

She greeted Jack with a flashing smile and a cocktail.

"Gentlemen prefer cocktails to tea . . . yes?"

"Thank you, Mrs. Dunbar."

"Oh, don't be so formal . . . *you* may call me Ethel . . . Jack."

She crossed the room for a silver box of cigarettes, knowing that his eyes would follow her . . . Returning, she held the light for his cigarette, revealing a rounded bare arm and more than a glimpse of reddish-tipped breasts as she seated herself beside him on the lounge.

"What's the new development?" . . . Jack got down to business quickly . . . He had an early dinner engagement with Tess.

"I caught the old boy kissing little Janet Westover last night. After dinner at the Westover's, we strolled in the grounds as it was a very hot evening . . . Behind the hedge, beyond the terrace, I saw them." Ethel smiled craftily.

"The mere fact of a kiss in the dark doesn't necessarily give grounds for divorce" . . . Jack explained . . . "Janet is a mere child and your husband old enough to be her father twice over . . . It might be construed as a paternal caress."

Ethel laughed . . . "But you don't know little Janet like I do . . . she is young in years but very mature in experience . . . Besides, it was hardly a paternal kiss, my dear Jack . . . I am competent to judge, I think." She threw back her head and blew a cloud of smoke.

"Well, what sort of a kiss was it?" Jack asked.

"It's rather difficult to describe in words" . . . Ethel's eyes half closed . . . "Perhaps I had better demonstrate it."

It seemed minutes later that she released his mouth and sank back among the cushions.

"Well . . . was that paternal?" she murmured.

Jack was entranced. Her nearness and the perfumed warmth of her personality penetrated him subtly. Running her fingers through his hair, she pulled his head down to hers and their lips met again in a fevered kiss that fired his blood . . . Then Jack's arms closed around her.

Late that night, Tess sleepily called across to Jack in the adjoining twin-bed:

"Did you have a busy day, darling?"

"You bet I did," he answered heartily.

"I was busy, too" . . . she whispered.

A splendid figure for a sculptor to dream
of reproducing.

Innocence is expressed in every line of this alluring maiden's figure.

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Drapery enhances the rather heavy modelling in this figure.

The strand of pearls helps this model to effect a charming pose.

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Southern exotic beauty is portrayed here
in a very satisfying mood.

Three Full Days

By Richard Donovan

TO HAVE SEEN Private John Newman striding along the Champs d'Elysees on that bright autumn afternoon, one might easily have been led to believe that the Marines had landed in Paris and that the situation was well in hand.

Johnnie, as his pals called him, was on furlough . . . three whole days of freedom from duty, and Johnnie determined to make the most of it, especially as it was his first furlough in a long while. And it was also his first visit to "gay Paree."

He and a bunch of his fellow privates had arrived that morning, and they had generously sampled a bewildering variety of the wines and cordials that were displayed so invitingly everywhere. They liked the taste and the exhilarating effects, and they had decided unanimously that they were going to be very fond of Paris. "This old burg is all right," they chorused.

By noon, they grew a bit argumentative as to the best way to spend the rest of the day and night. A few liked one thing, some preferred another. Johnnie was neutral. He hated arguments, anyway. During the altercation, several more drinks were downed.

Johnnie stood it amiably for a while, then he had a brilliant idea. "I'm gonna shake this bunch and see Paree all by myself," he thought. "These guys'll be arguing all day, and I've got no time to lose . . . three days is three days . . . I'll ditch 'em, then there'll be no arguments as far as I'm concerned."

Suiting his action to his thoughts, Johnnie slipped off unnoticed while the wordy fight was at its hottest, and now we find him strolling on the Champs and enjoying himself hugely . . . all alone and glad of it.

Tiring of the broad highway, Johnnie turned and hiked along at right angles to his previous course. Then he decided that a little drink wouldn't do any harm, so he slipped into a convenient door and toasted his quarrelsome mates. He chuckled and wondered if they missed him . . . the thought amused him so that he laughed out loud and ordered another drink.

Outside again, he continued on his way, turning and twisting in and out of the labyrinth of streets. Whenever he came to a thoroughfare that struck his fancy, he would turn into it and travel along until he encountered another more to his liking, then down or up *that* street he'd march.

And Johnnie en route missed very few of the dispensaries of the brew that cheers. At each place he'd try a different bottle with a different label, so it wasn't long before he felt like he was sitting on top of the world. Many times, with a hearty laugh, he would toast his pals and wonder where they had gone and what they were doing. And after a while he didn't care where or what.

Then Johnnie decided to see a cinema. He watched it for a half an hour and thought it was "punk". The theatre was hot and stuffy, anyway, and his head buzzed a bit, so he tramped out and continued his wanderings.

He kept on looking for new labels and new bottles. This was a good game, he guessed . . . and he played it strenuously.

Late that afternoon, Johnnie found himself standing on a corner "somewhere in Paris" . . . just where, he hadn't the faintest idea. People looked like twins, and the street lights through the dusk appeared to be double all along the line. He was very, very drunk.

He managed to see a window that looked like a restaurant, and suddenly decided to eat. "Must eat," he muttered to himself. "Must be hungry . . . that's the trouble."

But the thought of food made him turn away.

"No . . . don't wanna eat . . . wanna drink."

FROM her second-floor window across the street, Mimi LaFont watched Johnnie with some amusement. She was an artist's model. He had unwittingly wandered into the Latin Quartier, and when he started to cross against traffic, a passing taxicab narrowly missed him and another slowed down just in time to avoid a collision.

Mimi stuck her head out of the window and reasoned that the middle of the street was no place for anybody in Johnnie's evident condition. So she ran down the stairs and impulsively grabbed his arm, guiding him to the sidewalk and safety. There Johnnie leaned heavily against her and looked around bewildered.

Mimi saw that he was totally unable to take care of himself, and, her heart beating sympathetically, she resolved to conduct him to her flat, where she *might* succeed in sobering him.

She half-led, half-carried him upstairs and seated him by the window.

"*Mon Dieu* . . . you are very drunk." Mimi laughed merrily. This was an unexpected adventure that might serve to while away an otherwise dull evening, and she became more interested.

"Cold water . . . plenty of it." Mimi hurried off to get it, but found the chair deserted when she returned. And there on her bed lay Johnnie, sprawled out, dead to the world and snoring loudly.

"So . . . you're at home already, *non?*" Mimi laughed again. She pulled off his boots, loosened his collar and several buttons of his coat, then applied cold wet towels to his head. But Johnnie didn't budge. If anything, he snored the louder.

"Ah, *mon brave*, you make a lot of noise." She tweaked his nose playfully. "No use . . . let him sleep," she concluded, and set to work to make him more comfortable. Much pulling and tugging finally succeeded in ridding him of his coat, then his trousers, and Mimi swung his legs on to the bed, depositing his head on a pillow.

"There," she breathed a moment later. "Sleep it off."

Then she searched his pockets . . . a letter, post-marked "New York", caught her eye . . . "John Newman."

"That's a nice name, Johnnie boy . . . but you Americans are all crazy . . . don't know how to drink."

She next produced a roll of bills . . . "Pay-day, maybe."

Carefully putting the letter and money back in his pocket, she smoothed out the coat and trousers.

Now, with an amused smile, Mimi sat on the edge of the bed and watched Johnnie, whose snoring was almost terrifying in its regularity and depth of resonance.

Finally, with a shrug of her shoulders, she rose and, lighting a cigarette, resumed her seat at the window. Life had been rather dull for her during the preceding few weeks. Most of the artists who used her services as model were still out of the city, not having returned from their summer wanderings. The appearance of the handsome Johnnie on the scene had seemed like a stroke of luck and Mimi had hoped that cold towels, and perhaps a cup of strong black coffee, would put him back on his feet, sufficiently anyway for them to have spent a pleasant evening together. But . . . she glanced toward the bed, whence came an ear-splitting snore, and shrugged her shoulders again.

Well, thought Mimi, she might as well make herself comfortable. It certainly looked as though her dream of an interesting evening had vanished . . . and it seemed that tomorrow would be well on its way before Johnnie would ever come back to life.

Rapidly she undressed and snatched a kimono from a hook in her closet. About to slip it on, she glanced again toward the bed and walked over to it, the kimono draped across her bare arm.

Johnnie would have been startled if he had opened his eyes at that moment to find this beautiful nude girl staring down at him. But he slept on, blissfully unconscious of her proximity.

Nudity was no new experience for Mimi. She specialized in poses in the nude, and her face and figure amply justified her popularity as a model. Rusty-red hair blended well with the creamy quality of her smooth skin, and a pert little nose suited her small pouting mouth, full-lipped, crimson . . . straight, slim legs, swelling thighs and curving hips, well-proportioned arms and shoulders and a trim waist formed the proper setting for her very volup-

tuous breasts, twin mounds of creamy whiteness, lusciously pink-tipped. Mimi had never owned a brassiere . . . she needed none to support or suppress the firm solidity of her bosom, gloriously and independently prominent, the toast of the Latin Quartier and the envy of all her fellow models. Yes . . . Johnnie *would* have been startled.

Now, Mimi smiled, bent down and smoothed his tousled hair. Then she sat on the edge of the bed and, leaning over, kissed him full on his mouth. Her soft, warm lips were well calculated to infuse the breath of life into anyone, however cold, but there had been too many bottles and too many different labels, so Johnnie snored away in a deep alcoholic stupor.

His head was well back on the pillow, his mouth open to permit the heavy intake of air which regularly became a sonorous snore. Mimi snuggled closer, cupped his face in her hands, and gently but firmly fitted her open mouth to his.

She *could* kiss . . . there were no variations of the art with which she was not thoroughly familiar. She knew all the subtle tricks and also knew how to apply them.

Mimi now proceeded to put into practice all she had ever learned of the lip-and- tongue game, but to no avail. She kissed and fondled Johnnie to such an extent that her passionate nature was thoroughly aroused, but got no more response than she would have received from a marble statue. He slumbered on.

"Bah . . . it's impossible." Mimi was

Now, with an amused smile Mimi sat on the edge of the bed and watched Johnnie—

"All he does is sleep and snore so dreadfully . . . I cannot wake him . . . I am disgusted."

bewildered and annoyed at her complete failure to stir him. "And such a breath, *mon homme* . . did you try to drink Paris dry?"

She rose, slipped on her kimono, lit a cigarette and seated herself by the window once more. Then she decided to prepare something to eat and to brew some coffee . . . maybe he *would* awaken in a little while, and then a cup of strong coffee might help to save the evening from being such a total loss, she thought.

But, several hours later, after she had dined and smoked innumerable cigarettes, Johnnie hadn't budged. His snores were not quite so loud and not quite so continuous, but he lay like a log.

MIMI'S disgusted reverie was suddenly interrupted by a knock on the door, and, without waiting for an answer, a girl entered the room. Seeing Mimi's silhouette, she cried:

"Ah, Mimi, cherie . . . all alone in the darkness . . . why not a light and a little laughter?"

Mimi rose and made a light. Together the girls crossed to the window and stood looking down at the passing crowds.

Just then, a rattling, wheezy snore smote the darkness.

"What's that?" . . . Fifi Duval was astonished.

"Ah . . . I am so disappointed," Mimi answered. "Over there I saw him," pointing to the street corner below. "He was, oh, so very drunk, trying to cross the traffic . . . He seemed so helpless I ran down to save him from the taxicabs, and brought him here to amuse myself this dull evening . . . now all he does is sleep and snore so dreadfully . . . I cannot wake him . . . I *am* disgusted."

Fifi laughed merrily.

"May I look?" Deciding that no permission was necessary. Fifi crossed the room and gazed delightedly at Johnnie, sleeping there so peacefully.

"Ah, Mimi . . . so young and hand-

some . . . I do not blame you, *cherie*, for your annoyance." She laughed and turned to face her friend. "Fancy . . . a young man *asleep* in the charming Mimi's flat so early in the night . . . it is very amusing, *non*?" She laughed again.

"Bah . . . I care not" . . . Mimi's petulant voice belied her words.

Fifi lit a cigarette and drew in a deep puff. She also was a model, very much in demand for her exquisite profile and angelic countenance. Artists aiming to depict on canvas innocent, unspoiled youth vied with each other for Fifi's services.

She had now removed her coat and hat, and stood before a mirror smoothing her flaxen hair, somewhat windblown even in the short walk from her flat around the corner. She was like a china doll, all pink-and-white . . . slim figure, delicately rounded limbs, almost fragile . . . a tiny, rose-bud mouth . . . the small, swelling breasts of adolescence . . . truly a lovely little creature.

Mimi had returned to her seat by the window, and Fifi joined her pulling up a chair.

"I never saw you quite so put out, Mimi darling . . . he will wake soon, and then you can surprise him with your loveliness."

Mimi didn't answer, but sat staring moodily out into the night.

Fifi got up, and idly strolled over to the bed, puffing her cigarette. She smiled, bent down and stroked Johnnie's face with delicate, slender fingers.

"Mimi . . . perhaps one of your famous kisses might bring him to life," she suggested softly.

"It is impossible," Mimi retorted, coming across the room. "I have already tried my most passionate caresses, but it is so useless . . . he sleeps and sleeps."

"Let me try, *cherie* . . . would you mind?"

"Do what you want, Fifi . . . I care not . . . maybe you can do what I cannot, *oui*?" . . . Mimi shot a defiant glance and turned away.

Then Fifi sat on the bed and leaned across Johnnie, propping herself on one elbow. Her face was very close to his as she gently patted his cheek and ran the tip of a finger around his lips. Then she slowly rested her open rose-bud mouth on his, and the tip of a little pink tongue went into action.

Outwardly, Fifi appeared to be so innocent and child-like. Really, there was nothing in the encyclopedia of love that she didn't know or hadn't experienced. And kissing was a science with Fifi . . .

After several minutes of intense scientific application, Fifi released his mouth and breathed deeply. Even though there was no response, her emotions, like Mimi's, were thoroughly aroused by the very unusual situation, and the unique thrill it gave her caused her to decide to try it again.

Now she wound an arm around him and pressed her lissome body close to his. Her free hand caressed him, massaging, fondling, even shaking him. Then carefully, expertly she squeezed his lips further apart and sank her mouth into his. The minutes passed, and, at last Fifi straightened up, breathless.

Mimi, watching her, blew a cloud of cigarette smoke and laughed loudly. "Now what do you think, Fifi? . . . Is he a man of flesh and blood, or is he a frozen statue?"

Fifi slid off the bed and grabbed for a cigarette.

"Whew," she whistled, her little mouth pouting, perplexed. "Never have I known anything like this, Mimi . . . he breathes and snores, otherwise I would think he was a mummy."

"It is one new experience, anyway," Mimi remarked. "And so the night is not *entirely* wasted." She smiled sarcastically.

"Tomorrow morning, *cherie*." Fifi winked knowingly, putting on her hat. "He will awaken then, surely, and you can make up for lost time . . . But now I must go . . . Pierre awaits me."

IT WAS nearly midnight, and Mimi yawned deliciously. She had decided to go to sleep. What was the use of waiting any longer for this drowsy young man, she thought?

There on the cold stove was the coffee-pot, cold . . . the nice supper she had prepared for him, it, too, was cold . . . "just like Johnnie," Mimi murmured to herself.

She discarded the kimono and donned

a pair of black silk pajamas, ideally contrasting with her vivid coloring. Extinguishing the light, she tried to get into bed. But Johnnie lay sprawled all over it, his long legs spread so that there was no room left for Mimi.

Thoroughly exasperated, she grabbed him. "So, *mon brave* . . . you sleep and snore and make much noise, and now you take up all the room . . . move over." After a great deal of pulling and pushing, she finally succeeded in getting his inert frame out of her way. Then she slid into the bed.

Mimi lay awake for a while and listened to Johnie's regular, heavy breathing. She was angry . . . her night was spoiled, her thrilling plans were fruitless. But she consoled herself with the thought that tonight was no more dull than a lot of other nights recently. Then she fell asleep.

THE sun shone brightly when Johnnie stirred and stretched his stiffened limbs next morning. As he turned and twisted, his arm and leg touched something soft lying beside him.

He opened his eyes and stared at the ceiling. His head throbbed and ached miserably, and there was a horrible taste in his mouth. Then, suddenly sitting up, his heart beat like a trip-hammer at sight of the lovely apparition by his side. A bare arm lay across the pillow, and a luscious breast peeped from the deep neck of the pajama jacket.

"What the heck?" thought Johnnie. "here am I, and how did I get here?" He gingerly got out of bed and staggered across the room, looking for cold water and oceans of it. In the kitchen he drank a gallon or two, then noticed his state of undress. Back in the living room, he found his trousers neatly draped over a chair, Johnnie grabbed them, and was buckling his belt when he heard a voice:

"So, my Johnnie boy, did you decide to wake up at last?"

He whirled around to see a pair of sparkling eyes looking at him intently. Johnnie blushed boyishly and started to stammer something, but Mimi broke in:

"Never mind the excuses, *mon cher* . . . you were terribly drunk." She laughed merrily. "But I forgive you . . . Now some hot coffee would be very good, *non?*"

Mimi bounded out of bed and busied herself in the kitchenette. Johnnie still felt puzzled, but after Mimi's flood of explanations he began to realize how and when and why he arrived in such a very delicious spot. Several cups of black coffee straightened him up, and lighting a cigarette, he chuckled to himself.

"If those birds could see me now . . . oh, boy . . . pretty soft for me." He made himself comfortable in the window seat, and soon Mimi joined him.

"Come over here, *cheri*, and tell me all about yourself." She took his arm and led him to a small couch. Johnnie became very expansive and talked a lot. Meanwhile Mimi snuggled close and grew more infatuated with the attractive American every minute, particularly after her desolate evening.

Suddenly she slipped an arm around his neck and kissed him. Johnnie stopped talking. "This is getting good," he thought. "Great guns . . . what a lucky guy . . . if those bimbos could give me the once-over now."

Then Mimi went into action. All the pent-up passion of many hours was in her parted lips as she glued them to his, and Johnnie's response was fiery enough to more than recompense her for the empty prelude.

TWO days later, Johnnie was ready to step into the barge that waited to carry him back to his ship and duty. It had been a hectic furlough and he needed rest.

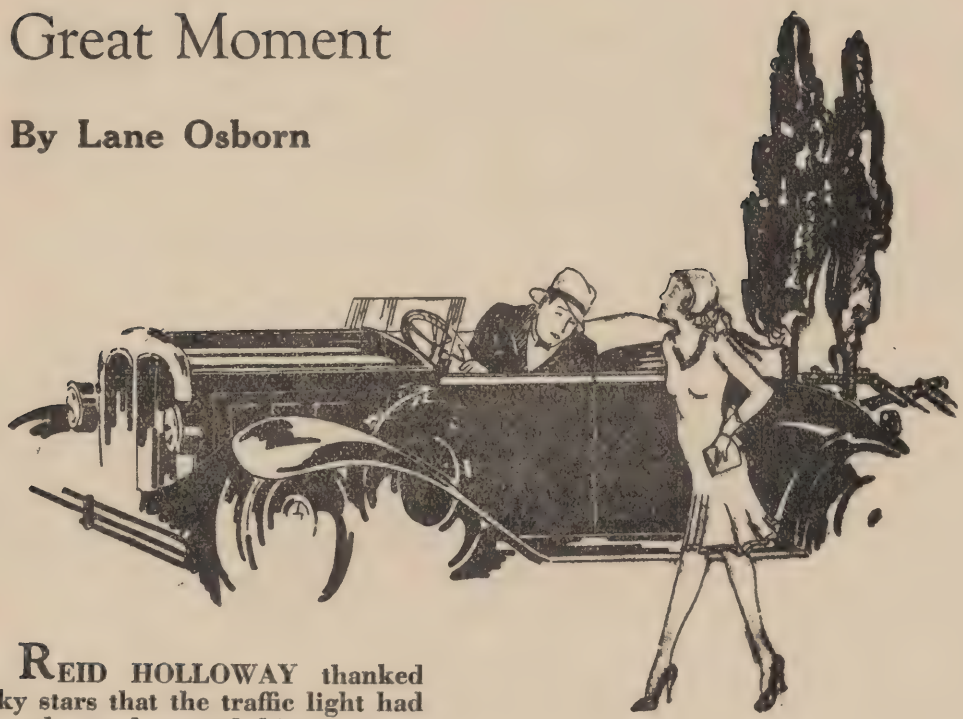
His pal shoved into sight and greeted him with a barrage of questions, to all of which Johnnie simply smiled a wordless answer.

"Did you do anything in Paree, Johnnie, old scout?"

"Plenty, boy, plenty," said Johnnie with a slow wink full of meaning.

His Great Moment

By Lane Osborn



REID HOLLOWAY thanked his lucky stars that the traffic light had glowed ruby and caused him to stop his smart, low-slung green roadster on that particular corner of Broadway. For never in his sophisticated and gold-lined thirty years had he espied a girl so attractive. She wore a very long coat of brown Kolinsky which was short enough to reveal the most beautiful legs Reid had ever feasted his eyes upon, and though her back was turned to him at the time, the exquisiteness of her alluring profile was visible enough to give him immediate pause.

She was looking at a jeweler's window. Her head was in a three-quarters position, her eyes rapt. Reid appraised the small, perfect nose, the deliciously-modelled lips, the slim lines of her, and he said judicially to himself:

"I may get a ticket for parking on this corner, but she seems well worth a triviality like that."

Which, since Reid had already accumulated five or six tickets for various infractions of the traffic laws in the last two months, will serve to show you that he wasn't exactly a restrained and careful young man. The fact was, Reid had been born with a diamond-studded silver spoon in his mouth and he was used to letting Reid Holloway get his own way, always, which perhaps accounts for his adventure with Madge Beatty.

Certainly, Madge Beatty was obvious enough as she stood there . . . a girl who poignantly desired some article of jewelry and couldn't afford it; and any sensible young man would have passed her by discreetly, refusing to allow himself the temptation of a flirtation with her—unless he was reckless with his money. Madge was so palpably a show girl, you see, and since show girls are notorious gold diggers, the answer is obvious.

However, since Reid was accustomed to making costly gifts to the fortunate ladies of his acquaintance who happened at one time or another to be his favorites, the fact that Madge so obviously desired jewelry brought him to her side with an anticipatory and very charming smile.

His curly blond head was hatless. It was very thick hair indeed, and Reid believed that hats were absolutely unnecessary even in the coldest weather. A great many men look very silly without hats, in the street, but Reid's splendid hair gave women a pleased and ecstatic thrill at any time.

"You move me deeply," smiled Reid. "Any artist, seeing your expression now, would paint an immediate masterpiece titled 'Desire' and win first prize for it,

doubtless, at an exhibition of art."

Madge Beatty turned with a frown. A crushing retort was on her tongue, for Reid hadn't been the first one to hand her a line as she stood there, and she was tired of it. But as she saw who it was, recognizing Reid instantly from his frequent photos in the society columns and under such headlines as "SOCIETY PLAYBOY IN COURT AGAIN FOR SPEEDING" . . . "BROADWAY PLAYBOY INVOLVED IN SENSATIONAL BREACH OF PROMISE SUIT" . . . "REID HOLLOWAY NAMED AS CO-RESPONDENT IN ANOTHER DIVORCE CASE" . . . the words died on her lips.

She smiled after a slight silence.

"Darling," she said, "if I had wished for just the right man to come along at this moment, I couldn't have gotten a better break in a million years."

Coming from her exquisite mouth, this rather vulgar speech might have been the most delightful, cultivated sentence Reid had heard from any society debutante. His brows lifted slightly, his smile became even more charming.

"Indeed?" said he. "And why?"

Madge indicated a platinum wrist watch priced at $475.00 in the window. It hung from a brass rod with other wrist watches, and it was easily the most beautiful and costly piece of jewelry on the rod.

"I've had my eye on that adorable wrist watch for a full year," she said. "And if I don't get it soon I'll go nuts or something, because it's in my blood like a pain. I've skimped on lunches and stockings and gloves and hats and everything so I could save up enough to buy it, but so far all I've put away couldn't buy even the price tag on it."

"Supposing," said Reid, gently, "I buy it for you? Will my reward be adequate in proportion?"

"Adequate isn't the word, darling," she said fervently. "I'll burn you up with my grateful kisses and love you to death. I know you. You're Reid Holloway, and there's nothing small time about you. Shall we go in and get it, darling?" Already she had linked her arm through his, and her immense sea-blue eyes begged him not to be a piker.

But he hung back and shook his head. His smile was sardonic.

"Kisses and love are all very well in their way, my dear. But a gift like that deserves the ultimate gift in return. Do you follow me, or is it necessary to draw explicit blue prints for your complete understanding?"

She bit her lip, and for an instant her eyes flamed at him impatiently.

"My God," she said. "What a line." Then she shrugged with the air of one who yields to the inevitable. "All right, you win." They entered the shop.

Fortunately, their stay was brief, so Reid was not subjected to the annoyance of a ticket for parking too long in front of Mercier's. He smiled, well-pleased, at Madge as he shot her toward his Park Avenue apartment in the roadster with speed. God was in his heaven, and all was right with the universe, for presently this delectable example of femininity would be wholly his. He thought of Alice Durant, who was waiting for him most impatiently in her Long Island villa, and he looked at Madge's thrilling profile with ecstasy. Alice, true enough, was very lovely and expected him to marry her soon, but what was a mere fiancee when an illicit romance beckoned?

In spite of the fact that he had purchased the gifts Madge would presently bestow upon him, Reid could still label this episode "romance", for he loved to pour glamour on these impromptu adventures and never grew tired of their eternal allure. The afternoon was a brilliant December one, cold but flooded with sunshine from a blue sky, and luxurious motors skimmed by, and women of fashion and *chic* glanced at him with envious eyes from upholstered cushions, openly admiring him. Reid's ego swelled and since Madge was attired in the smart Kolinsky coat, she did him more than justice, though he wondered sardonically what sugar papa had given it to her.

"Why so silent?" he bantered, for she hadn't said a word in ten minutes.

"What can I say?" she rejoined. "You got me what I wanted, and now, I suppose, *you'll* get what *you* want. That's that, isn't it?"

"You make it too commercial altogether," he complained, frowning. And he essayed a grin. "Come, now, my dear, be more cheerful. Life isn't as cut and dried as all that. After all, it's a glorious day, and there will be delicious food and wine, and in the setting

of my home you will be entrancing. For one afternoon, at least, we two will be as gods on Olympus . . ."

She gave him a derisive smile.

Her eyes were full of mockery as she returned, "Rave on, darling; your chatter is swell. If you enjoy kidding me, why not?"

"Kidding you!" Reid was provoked with the perverse creature. It was irritating to have a companion so practical-minded, so deadly serious. It took the zest out of the affair; it was as if some ruthless hand had snatched away the caviar before the feast, leaving him without appetite. The blue sky and the glorious sunshine were suddenly gray and drab, and the women who smiled at him from passing motors seemed to be laughing at him all at once, contemptuously.

He said "damn!' in the most fervent

He took her on his lap at once; deliberately he kissed her lips, her throat, her slim breasts . . .

tone she'd heard since she'd met him, and became sullenly silent. He began to wish he'd never met her, contemplated for a savage instant stopping the car and ordering her to leave him. But Reid's ego couldn't stand such a thought. Women never failed to respond to his charm and magnetism, and, by the Lord Harry,she should end up by begging him on her knees to kiss her, to take her in his arms!

His Jap silently took her coat and the very small brown cloche she removed from her chestnut hair, clipped very short and curling alluringly around just-revealed tiny ears. Her brown pussy-willow taffeta dress was modestly cut, surprisingly so to Reid, who had instantly recognized her as an unmistakable Broadway type.

He took her on his lap in the sitting room at once; deliberately he kissed her lips, her throat, her slim breasts just above their natural parting. As he did so, he was aflame with desire for her all at once, for she had a natural and exquisite fragrance, and she was warm and delicious and vital . . .

The Jap appeared swiftly with a tray and set it down on the small Oriental tabouret near the divan on which they were blended so closely; and Reid, his eyes flaming, poured two glasses of Scotch from the decanter and offered her one with a laugh suddenly reckless. As the Jap departed:

"Drink it, my dear," Reid commanded. "And for the Lord's sake, don't be so frigid!" She had been absolutely passive in his arms, like a woman of cold clay as far as spontaneous responses went.

"Sure," she agreed, lifelessly. "Why not?"

As she drained the glass, Reid dashed off his in a passion of sullen anger. Color burned in her cheeks all at once, her eyes became brilliant.

"Gee," she said. "That's swell, Reid! Give me another one."

A glow of happy relief surged through him as he watched her drink the second one. Look at her now, by heaven! The ice was melting, the real passionate goddess was emerging at last. He tossed off his drink with a feeling of excitement such as he hadn't experienced in many years, and he kissed her flamingly . . . She clung to him with strangling arms, and her lips sought his fiercely, magnificently. How she could stir him when she was like this, he thought, the luxury of the room a blur before his eyes. Then he recalled her indifference in the car, and he gave a harsh laugh.

He stood her on her feet. "You like my kisses, Madge? You want more?"

She stared at him blankly.

"Darling, what's the matter with you? Why do you stop? Sure I like your kisses, Reid—you're marvelous!"

She swayed a little on her feet, he noted. Evidently, for all she was a chorus girl or, perhaps, a night club dancer, she wasn't used to liquor.

She tried to climb on his lap again, but he held her back, laughing.

"Beg for my kisses," he said. "Plead for them, my dear, and perhaps I'll take you in my arms again." This was his great moment of triumph; his supreme moment. In this moment, recompense for those miserable moments in the car, with a giant R. Exaltation filled his heart as he held her off; and he shook his head, inexorably. "Beg for them, Madge—that's the only way!"

"Oh, Reid, you're mean! You're mean, Reid! I—adore you. . . ."

"Take off that Quakerish dress," he commanded. "It pains my eyes! Take it off, and perhaps I'll relent."

"Oh, you're mean, Reid," she quavered, and began to slip the dress off over her head. There it lay at last, on the Persian carpet an inch thick, and there she was, in coral undies revealing such exquisite lines . . . that he gave a gasp of sheer whelmed admiration, while his eyes flamed at her devouringly. He rose, caught her up in his strong arms.

Just then the door buzzer in the foyer shrilled viciously.

Reid, on his way to the adjoining bedroom with his delectable burden, paused, and waited to see who his unexpected visitor was.

It was Alice, his fiancee.

She came straight down the foyer toward him, Sato's horrified eyes popping from his head behind her. Since she dropped in on Reid at least once a week for tea, Sato knew her well, and he was completely aware of the significance of the solitaire on her finger which had set Reid back a most tremendous amount of money. . . .

"Very thrilling," said Alice icily, her

scathing glance on the girl in Reid's arms. "It is certainly unfortunate that I interrupted you like this, isn't it? As a fiancee, I seem to be one in name only, for this isn't the first time you have disappointed me for one of your ladies of the pavement. . . . Having engaged a private detective to discover why you didn't keep so many of your appointments with me, I also engaged this girl . . . as a decoy . . . so your flaming love letters to me will help me out of quite a jam when they are read to a jury, Reid!"

Reid made a hoarse sound in his throat as a bored, broad-shouldered individual with a cigar pushed his way past Sato and began to write things in a memorandum book He almost dropped Madge from his numb arms, but that young lady nimbly recovered herself, laughing, and running into the sitting room, began to don her dress quite leisurely.

He approached Alice with desperate eyes.

"Can't we settle this out of court, for the Lord's sake?" he pleaded. "I don't want that sort of damned publicity; I'll give any reasonable amount to avoid it, for I've had more than enough of it, Alice!"

"Since when are you so anxious to avoid publicity?" she mocked. "You've invited it constantly before!"

"Please," he begged. "Don't rub it in. How much do you want for those letters?"

They settled the matter at last for a staggering sum. As Reid saw Alice depart with Madge and the detective, he was beset by such a variety of emotions as had never in his sophisticated, smug existence torn him before.

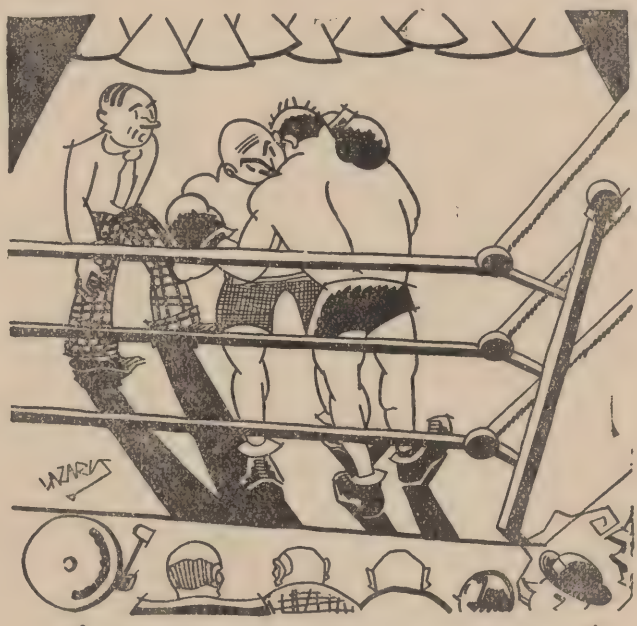
He sat in the deep leather chair before the fireplace in the sitting room ten minutes later, like a man of cardboard. A pink garter studded with imitation pearls, on the carpet nearby, presently caught his eye. It was one of Madge's, which had apparently fallen from one of her delectable legs and been forgotten—no, it couldn't be—Madge had worn violet ones. Ah, he recognized it now. This one had belonged to Irma, of the Scandals . . . the one he'd entertained here yesterday . . . who had left him very much lit up and disheveled . . .

He caught the pink trifle up savagely and hurled it into the flames.

"I'm off the creatures for life!" he vowed. "You can't trust one of them, damn them all! What a world when you can't put any faith in a single woman!"

Which, coming from Reid Holloway, must have made Fate smile sardonically.

Step lively, boys! The sale is on!!



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entitled

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Entre-Nous

Dear Editor—

I've just finished reading the February issue of "Gay Parisienne". It is simply swell—from the gorgeous drunken lassie on the cover—down to the very last period. But the thrill of thrills for me was in the letters from the girls in your "Entre-Nous" column. Those babies know what they want and don't mind telling the world. How I would like to correspond with them and it's a crime for you not to let us know their addresses. Be a good sport and send us a few of them.

And for the love of Pete, give us lots of the "Entre-Nous" letters—they are swell.

Yours,

—T. C.

— o —

Dear Sir—

In the February issue under the column headed "Entre-Nous", I see the ladies are clamouring for undraped males and stories of such.

Here's another suggestion: How about a few "Female Impersonation" stories? They would take well.

Hope to see some in future issues.

Very truly yours,

—A. Neurotic, N. Y. C.

— o —

Dear Sir—

I have just finished reading the February issue of Gay Parisienne, the first time I ever had the exquisite pleasure of reading such a wonderful magazine. Baby—I'm a subscriber for life. I fund Kay Carroll's 'One Busy Day' the hottest of five of the zippiest tales I've ever come across. How about a 'pen pal column' in which the readers of Gay Parisienne and La Paree could correspond with one another. I am especially interested in hearing from A. J. Please advise in next issue how to reach her. Yours for a bigger and more torrid magazine,

—Jack, South Bend.

Dear Sirs—

I greatly enjoy your magazine. From cover to cover it seems vaguely inspired by that drooping, voluptuous spirit of "Pan". The letters from readers, too, are of interest (we trust they are genuine). Delightful as the stories and pictures are to us readers, some of whom find danger and difficulty in consciously seeking feminine thrills and emotional experiences; there is never a limit to be reached with respect to a reader's satisfaction that may not be brought about with more attention to little things. For instance: the expression on a model's face, the suggestion of what a hand or cloak might have concealed had it wanted to, the elimination of all skinny models as well as those of the 'hard faced' type. No one really wants coarseness and there is a difference between that and exotic beauty. Those little things would help.

We know that your stories would be forbidden sale were they of a more sexy nature. I have frequently played with the idea that it might be possible to include an extra picture or story placed 'loose leaf' in the book and mailed to the dealers separately; to be included and excluded on examination. However, I suppose you do your best in that line —with due thanks,

Very sincerely,

—P. A. J., Phila., Pa.

— o —

Dear Sir—

I am a constant reader of Gay Parisienne and La Paree and in the February issue of Gay Parisienne I note several letters from girl readers.

I would love to correspond with such girls and believe they would enjoy my letters as well as the stories in your magazine, and both coupled would be great.

Could you send me the address of A. J., M. H., M. S., A. K...? I am enclosing stamped envelope for reply.

Why not publish a correspondent corner? That is where peppy fellows can write to peppy girls. Here is my personal description: Age 30, single; 5 ft. 8; weight 160; dark brown hair and blue eyes.

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Dear Sir—

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I am sure that many a spanked girl would find consolation in reading such a story.

Yours truly,

—C. L.

— o —

Gay Parisienne.

Your magazine of art poses is one of the best.

My daughter 35 had been posing for artists for a long ime without my knowledge. I discovered her deception by a photo in her bureau.

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—Mrs. M. T. N., B'klyn, N. Y.

P. S. —Her father says it is alright now for her to model if she cares for such a career.

— o —

Dear Sir—

I read the December issue some time ag but have not been able to write to you for many reasons. I enjoyed "Stranded in Paris" very much.

I am not condemning the magazine at all, but think that you could make the pictures stronger and more alluring by removing the veils and the hands that cover up the delicate spots.

In regards to the stories I think that you could make them stronger and more thrilling.

But after all is said and done, we think that you have the best magazine in the market.

Very truly yours,

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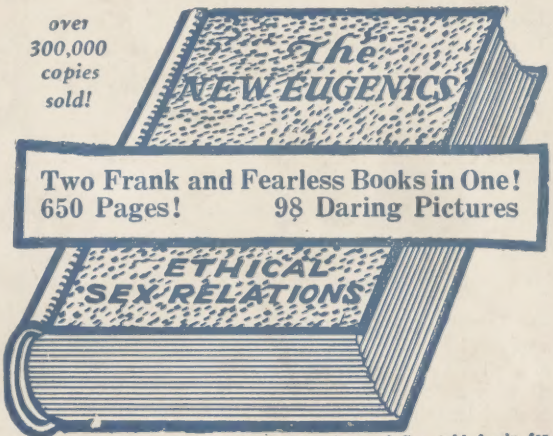

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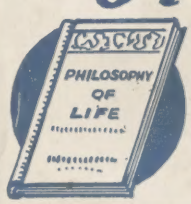

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